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# Choices for Bates: New Pathways for the Learning Century, February 2010

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CHOICES FOR  
**Bates**

A PLAN FOR BATES  
**College**

FEBRUARY, 2010



*New Pathways for the  
Learning Century at **BATES***



## **WHEN THE ALUMNI WALK WAS BUILT,**

IT CHANGED THE LANDSCAPE AT BATES IN EXCITING WAYS. THE WALK REDEFINED THE WAY WE SEE A PART OF CAMPUS, CREATED NEW CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BUILDINGS AND, IN THE PROCESS OF PLANNING AND EXECUTION, BROUGHT MEMBERS OF THE BATES COMMUNITY CLOSER TOGETHER.

**THIS REPORT** SETS OUT TO ACHIEVE SIMILAR AIMS FOR LEARNING IN OUR RESIDENTIAL ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT.

**LIKE THE ALUMNI WALK,** THE IDEAS IN THIS REPORT REFLECT THE DEDICATION AND ENERGY OF PEOPLE FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE BATES COMMUNITY. JUST AS CONNECTIVITY IS ONE OF THE GOALS OF THE ALUMNI WALK AND THIS PLANNING PROCESS, SO TOO ARE WE COMMITTED TO FINDING NEW APPROACHES TO STRENGTHEN THE TRADITIONAL BATES EXPERIENCE.

**HOW WILL WE KNOW** IF WE'VE BEEN SUCCESSFUL? IF WE SEE OUR STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF AND ALUMNI CREATE NEW CONNECTIONS BETWEEN LEARNING AND LIVING—IF WE SEE THEM SET OUT ON JOURNEYS THAT NO ONE HAS YET IMAGINED—THEN WE WILL KNOW THAT OUR WORK HAS LASTING VALUE.



*New Pathways for the  
Learning Century at **BATES***

FEBRUARY, 2010

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**FOR TWO YEARS**, faculty, staff, students and trustees have worked together to guide a highly participative process to shape the future of Bates. Open communication has been a key element and has included community meetings; presentations to departments, divisions, programs and trustees; and a *Planning at Bates* website and newsletter as venues for sharing ideas.

Our aim is to remake the liberal arts college for this still new century by deeply integrating our learning practices and strengthening the ways we work and interact with each other and with the world. This report and the strategic processes that have led to it call for members of the Bates community to create a more effective web of relationships, academic programs and informal learning opportunities that extend throughout the College. In the report that follows, we examine the goals, steps and processes by which this work can be carried out.

In the areas of arts, natural sciences and mathematics, and learning across the entire Bates' experience, we see the potential for a deeper integration of ideas and practices that builds on Bates' strengths as an excellent learning environment and an egalitarian community. While other parts of the Bates experience are just as important, we believe an investment in these areas at this time has the greatest potential for strengthening the substance of our offerings and supporting more powerful collaborations among faculty, students, administrators, alumni, board members and the community.

The initiatives involving the arts and sciences and math strengthen different ways of knowing and collaborating in an intellectually ambitious and well-rounded community. The Bates arts plan seeks robust support for more collaborative productions—dance, visual art and new media, music and theater—to promote different ways of thinking about the world. We envision an Arts Collaborative that will be attuned to our liberal arts mission and work well across disciplines and campus/community borders to sustain, enhance and coordinate the vitality and visibility of the arts.

In undergraduate science education, Bates has an opportunity to improve the quality, coherence and reach of the science and math curriculum, and significant steps are underway. An investment in facilities and more resources for faculty and undergraduate research will ensure that incoming students work in a technologically advanced setting that adds to the excitement of scientific discovery.

To build on the strengths of the learning environment at Bates, we have identified three distinct projects that will improve cohesion, focus support and generally advance learning in the residential liberal arts setting: a Learning Commons to promote excellence, innovation, diversity and collaboration; a Residential Life program that extends intellectual exchange beyond the classroom and helps students strengthen interpersonal skills; and a commitment to diversity as both a goal and a resource. An investment in these areas goes to the heart of Bates' distinctiveness.

As the process of developing and vetting these College-wide initiatives has shown, we have tapped energy on campus to develop a vision of a new kind of liberal arts learning and living community. Our work is bringing forth a vibrant spirit of collaboration and ideas that are preparing Bates for a leading role in this new learning century.





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**A MESSAGE FROM  
PRESIDENT HANSEN**



Dear Fellow Members of the Bates Community and Friends,

Two years ago members of the Bates community came together to think strategically about the future of the College. We began by asking what it is that makes Bates great, and how the College can be even greater. Pausing after a period of considerable accomplishment, it was the right moment to re-examine and reaffirm our communal sense of purpose and take up important conversations about our future direction.

We knew, of course, that many external forces and trends were reshaping higher education in general and affecting strong liberal arts colleges like Bates in particular. We did not know that in just a year, we and most other institutions in this country and around the world would face a major economic crisis. What began as a timely move for the College became an even more urgent effort to plan for the years ahead.

Not surprisingly, our enterprising faculty used the economic situation to teach our students more about how individuals and societies react to and accommodate sudden change. And similarly, we intensified our College-wide effort to adjust our expectations and complete this plan. I am very proud of our collective work and filled with confidence that our future is as promising and purposeful as has been our rich past.

The ideas we describe in this document resulted from intense collaborative and individual work by many people, including 74 members of the faculty, staff and student body who served on the Steering Group, the Working Groups and the Initiative Teams. While it is impossible to thank them adequately for their insights and efforts, I am pleased to have this opportunity to acknowledge their enormous contributions publicly. It was a true joy to watch their ideas and enthusiasm coalesce and unfold.

Thanks also to the hundreds of people who attended focus groups, community discussions and the many other gatherings from which this plan flowed. I look forward to continued conversations about our future and to even more exciting collaborative work.

With warm regards,



ELAINE TUTTLE HANSEN  
*President, Bates College*

# PROJECT GUIDANCE



## STEERING GROUP

*Terry Beckmann*, Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer

*Pam Baker '70*, Helen A. Papaioanou, Professor of Biological Sciences and Director of Faculty Research and Scholarship

*Dave Chirayath*, Research Analyst in Advancement  
(selected by the Bates College Staff Association)

*Matt Côté*, Associate Professor of Chemistry and  
Associate Dean of the Faculty

*Meg Creedon '08*

*Sylvia Federico*, Assistant Professor of English and representative from  
the President's Institutional Planning and Advisory Committee

*Tedd Goundie*, Dean of Students

*Elaine Hansen*, President, Chair

*Ben Hester '10* (selected by Bates College Student Government)

*Leslie Hill*, Associate Professor of Politics and Special Assistant to the President

*Bill Hiss '66*, Vice President for External Affairs

*Bev Johnson*, Associate Professor of Geology and representative from  
the President's Institutional Planning and Advisory Committee

*Kevin McHugh*, Director of Athletics, Chair of Physical Education,  
and representative from President's Council

*Wylie Mitchell*, Dean of Admissions

*Helen Regan*, Visiting Professor of Education

*Jill Reich*, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty

*Tom Tracy*, Phillips Professor of Religion

*Gene Wiemers*, Vice President for Information and Library Services  
and Librarian



## WORKING GROUP 1

CLARIFYING AND EXPLAINING THE BATES EXPERIENCE

*Ryan Bavis*, Associate Professor of Biology

*Czerny Brasuell*, Director of Multicultural Affairs

*Jared Cash '04*, Associate Dean of Admissions

*Jay Collier*, Web Communications Manager

*Rebecca Corrie*, Phillips Professor of Art and Visual Culture

*Paul Gastonguay '89*, Head Coach of Men's and Women's Tennis

*Leslie Hill*, Associate Professor of Politics and Special Assistant to the President

*Kristofer Jonsson '08*

*David Miller '08*

*Kerry O'Brien*, Assistant Dean of the Faculty

*Helen Regan*, Visiting Professor of Education, Chair

*Gene Wiemers*, Vice President for Information and Library Services  
and Librarian, ex officio

*Kathy Arsenault*, Assistant to the Vice President for Advancement,  
administrative support

## WORKING GROUP 2

LEARNING AT BATES

*Mark Bessire*, Director of the Museum of Art and Lecturer in Humanities  
(through January 2009)

*Matt Côté*, Associate Professor of Chemistry and  
Associate Dean of the Faculty, Chair

*Elizabeth Eames*, Associate Professor of Anthropology

*Erin Foster Zsiga*, Assistant Dean of Students

*Tedd Goundie*, Dean of Students, ex officio

*Margaret Imber*, Associate Professor of Classical and Medieval Studies

*Meg Kinney '08*

*Garrett Kopeski '11*

*Carmita McCoy*, Associate Dean for Student Transition

*Kevin McHugh*, Director of Athletics and Chair of Physical Education

*Ellen Peters '87*, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment

*Daniela Ritter '10*

## **WORKING GROUP 3**

TEACHING AND SCHOLARSHIP AT BATES

*Pam Baker '70*, Helen A. Papaioanou Professor of Biology and  
Director of Faculty Research and Scholarship, Chair

*Ellen Anderson*, Foreign Language Technology Manager

*Matt Duvall*, Manager, Imaging and Computing Center

*Holly Gurney*, Associate Dean of Students

*Joe Hall*, Associate Professor of History

*Laura Juraska*, Associate College Librarian for Reference Services

*Emily Kane*, Whitehouse Professor of Sociology

*Maggie Maurer-Fazio*, Betty Doran Stangle Professor of Applied Economics

*Jill Reich*, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty, ex officio

*Krista Scottham*, Associate Professor of Psychology

*Carole Taylor*, Professor of English

*Marty Deschaines '75*, Assistant Director for Community Volunteerism and  
Student Development, Harvard Center and Office Coordinator of the  
Chaplain's Office, administrative support



## WORKING GROUP 4

### STRENGTHENING THE BATES COMMUNITY

*Terry Beckmann*, Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer, ex-officio

*Bill Blaine-Wallace*, Multifaith Chaplain

*Patti Buck*, Associate Professor of Education

*Mira David* '09

*Fatima Diaz* '08

*Elaine Dumont*, Den Supervisor

*Jen Koviach-Cote*, Associate Professor of Chemistry

*Paul Kuritz*, Professor of Theater

*Gwen Lexow*, Head Softball Coach and Lecturer in History

*Mary Main*, Director of Human Resources

*Sarah Potter* '77, Bookstore Director and Contract Officer

*James Reese*, Associate Dean of Students

*David Scobey*, Director, Harvard Center for Community Partnerships

*Tom Tracy*, Phillips Professor of Religion, Chair

*Wayne Zimmerman*, Director of Advancement Services

*Claire Schmoll*, Assistant to the Vice President for Finance and Administration, administrative support

## INITIATIVE TEAM

### THE ARTS IN THE COLLEGE AND THE COMMUNITY

*Mark Bessire*, Director of the Museum of Art, Co-chair until January 2009

*Rebecca Corrie*, Phillips Professor of Art and Visual Culture (Art History)

*Carol Dilley*, Associate Professor of Dance

*Kerry O'Brien*, Assistant Dean of Faculty, Co-chair

*Kirk Read*, Associate Professor of French, Division Chair in Humanities, Co-chair from January 2009

## INITIATIVE TEAM

### NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS IN THE LIBERAL ARTS

*Matt Côté*, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Associate Dean  
of the Faculty, Co-chair

*Pallavi Jayawant*, Assistant Professor of Mathematics

*Hong Lin*, Professor of Physics, Co-chair

*Rebecca Sommer*, Associate Professor of Biology

## INITIATIVE TEAM

### LEARNING AT BATES

*Pam Baker*<sup>’70</sup>, Helen A. Papaioanou Professor of Biological Sciences  
and Director of Faculty Research and Scholarship

*Tedd Goundie*, Dean of Students and representative from the  
Campus Facilities Master Planning Steering Committee, Co-chair

*Joe Hall*, Associate Professor of History and representative from the  
Educational Policy Committee

*Judy Head*, Associate Dean of the Faculty

*Leslie Hill*, Associate Professor of Politics and Special Assistant to the President

*Margaret Imber*, Associate Professor of Classical and Medieval Studies and  
representative from the Campus Facilities Master Planning Steering Committee,  
Co-chair

*Laura Juraska*, Associate College Librarian for Reference Services

*Andrew White*, Director of User Services, Information and Library Services



# CHOICES FOR BATES



# PREFACE

IN A RECENT *New Yorker* article about the failure of the banking industry, Malcolm Gladwell (2009) describes the psychology of over-confidence and how it can spell disaster in worlds that are competitive and complex. A new book, *Ripped*, examines the arrogance of music companies that resist making changes to become more agile (Jennings, 2009). While these examples refer to banks and record companies, they could apply to elite liberal arts colleges just as well.

At top colleges like Bates, we fully believe in our greatness as institutions that play a vital role in the success of individuals, communities and, by extension, our democracy. But the very confidence we exude could make us less adaptive than we need to be. Studies in psychology show that the most experienced and capable of us tend to “overestimate the accuracy of our judgments, especially when we are personally invested in difficult work” (Gladwell, 2009). While Bates may not be immune in this regard, we are fortunate to possess a sense of restlessness rooted in the understanding that we have not reached our goal—and never will. In fact, it is this striving that sets us apart. As Oscar Wilde (1893) wrote in *A Woman of No Importance*, “Discontent is the first step in the progress of a man or a nation.”

Aristotle described this spirit of searching for excellence as not an act but a habit. The choices we have made in this report involving changes, initiatives and projects at Bates take their energy from this spirit. Our choices relate directly to the world today—to the way our students learn—and to choices they may need to embrace to live fully in our evolving society. After all, higher education is not a thing apart—it is completely imbricated with the new realities that surround us. The college on a hill where scholars and learners retreat only to think great thoughts is obsolete.

THE PRIORITIES AND GOALS WE NAME  
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IN OUR EVOLVING SOCIETY.

—President Elaine Hansen

Perhaps not so obsolete but fading is the concept of college being a time out—a place where young adults can indulge (and sometimes over-indulge) in a state of post-adolescence. While the college experience should be expansive enough to allow for personal experimentation and making mistakes, Bates wants to create a dynamic learning environment that is tuned to the world and its multiplicity of viewpoints, attitudes and expressions. Not only do we want to be this kind of place, we want the kind of student who is looking for this kind of place.

One aim of such a place is to promote learning conditions in which creative individuals emerge with a greater awareness of the world and how best to make use of their abilities. As Gladwell astutely pointed out in *Outliers* (2008), another of his studies that examined factors contributing to the success of individuals, our society has been so focused on describing the characteristics and traits of successful leaders that we have largely ignored the social conditions which often gave rise to their genius. Success is a group project, according to Gladwell. “When outliers become outliers it is not just because of their own efforts. It’s because of the contributions of lots of different people and lots of different circumstances—and that means that we, as a society, have more control about who succeeds—and how many of us succeed—than we think. That’s an amazingly hopeful and uplifting idea” (Gladwell, 2008).

These ideas about successful individuals and learning conditions frame our recent conversations and planning processes at Bates: How can we do more to help our students and faculty achieve alignment with their work? How can lots of different people in our community create the best educational and social conditions to allow our students and faculty to succeed? What do we mean by *success*? The changes caused by current economic realities give us an opportunity to reconsider what success means in

**TABLE 1** | RECENT INFLUENCES  
on the LIBERAL ARTS

*The following changes in curricular and scholarly engagement, which are influencing liberal arts education throughout the world, inform this report as well:*

- **INTERDISCIPLINARITY**, or the growing recognition that solutions to problems lie across the disciplines, and not wholly within them.
- **INCLUSIVENESS**, or ensuring that all ideas are debated, all voices are heard.
- **EXPANSION OF THE CANON**, or our unceasing efforts to push back the frontiers of knowledge.
- **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**, or capturing the educational advantage of the many ways we learn.
- **SERVICE**, or what we gain from helping others—and how we understand the world and ourselves in the process.

a culture that has long been defined by consumer spending, a quest for short-term profits at the expense of long-term stability, and a heavy reliance on foreign sources of energy that has led to more instability in the world.

At Bates we define success on our own terms: as a liberal arts community that educates complicated, interesting and creative individuals. We empower students to work for change in the world, to help them find focus, discipline and self-control so they can deal with the reality of compromises, messiness, difficult people and difficult situations. “Control of attention is the ultimate individual power,” wrote David Brooks in a *New York Times* editorial (2008). “Individuals who can focus attention have the ability to hold a subject or problem in their mind long enough to see it anew.”

We also believe that this cultivation of passionate focus and controlled intensity must be balanced and sustained or it can lead to burn-out. “What I love about Bates,” one recent graduate said, “is that in spite of its academic intensity, there is also an aura of laid-backness, where people are genuine and down-to-earth and really know when it’s time to let loose.”

At Bates, then, something as ordinary as the friendship of down-to-earth people continues to be essential to the passionate pursuit of extraordinary scholarship and discovery. This caring camaraderie encourages students to try the new and the difficult, to make mistakes and try again. Every contact with a member of the Bates faculty and also with our staff—from the Admissions office to the Dining Center, from the librarian to the custodian—reinforces this sense that it is the people here who make it safe to take risks. Bates’ celebrated friendliness doesn’t mean bland harmony and contentment; it means support for discord and, again, risk-taking: “Differences of opinion are welcomed and the risk of making mistakes is respected, so long as you own them and learn from them,” another recent graduate said.

What we have done so well in the past will continue to serve as a foundation for the future: developing the individual in a close-knit community of learners through personal attention and interaction between student and faculty member, and sharing the excitement of learning in a way that develops the capacity for students to acquire knowledge—and make informed choices—in an increasingly complex world. The report that follows has brought together the Bates community in a number of conversations and planning sessions. We believe that it reflects the intelligence, creativity and warmth of our special place, as well as offering a blueprint for moving forward to secure our promising future.



## THE LEARNING CENTURY AT BATES

THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT we attempt to elucidate the intrinsic value of a liberal arts education, how it broadens the mind, enriches the heart, and allows one to focus in a world overloaded with complex, conflicting, and sometimes polarizing ideas. But how exactly does this learning take place? How can we improve our learning environment in a world that is rapidly being transformed by technology, new information resources and learning approaches?

A liberal arts college education happens in a very particular space and time, one that is quite different from the places where people spend most of their lives. It is a place where budding learners (traditionally, young people) are brought together with scholars to experiment freely with competing interests and approaches to knowledge. Students are safeguarded in several respects: They receive a broad education that helps them avoid the temptation of specializing in a certain area prematurely; they interact with a large number of people, scholars and fellow students, with whom they may respectfully disagree; and they are mostly shielded from certain responsibilities involving the “real world.” Alfred North Whitehead recognized the importance of this environment almost a century ago: “The initial discipline of imagination in its period of youthful vigor requires that there be no responsibility for immediate action. The habit of unbiased thought . . . cannot be acquired when there is the daily task for preserving a concrete organization. You must be free to think rightly and wrongly, and free to appreciate the variousness of the universe undisturbed by its perils.”

WE WANT TO EQUIP STUDENTS TO DEAL  
WITH A WORLD OF CHANGE, CHALLENGE  
AND COMPLEXITY; TO HAVE THE CURIOSITY  
AND APTITUDE TO KEEP ON LEARNING;  
TO BE OPEN-MINDED; TO FIND BALANCE  
IN LIFE; TO CELEBRATE CREATIVITY AND  
IMPROVISATION; AND TO FIND JOY IN THE  
BEAUTY OF ART AND ITS EXPRESSION.

As noted above, we recognize from experience that this space should be expansive for exploring and experimenting, for learning from successes and failures. It should also offer the option of hands-on problem-solving—real-world work and play in the lab or the studio, on the stage or the athletic field—that is fully connected to the life of the mind, as broadly understood, and the intellectual enterprise of the College.

—A Bates Trustee

The initiatives and projects we propose in this report reinforce the values that define the Bates experience and re-interpret these values based on new perspectives and realities. We aim to help all members of the Bates community share in a holistic learning experience that increases the focus on excellent faculty work; engages students in learning; and prepares them for enlightened citizenship, leadership and life. Through preserving the unique character and historical strengths of Bates, we believe our plans and initiatives reaffirm the notion that we educate “the whole student” to the highest standards of academic excellence in this new learning century. Doing so requires that we continue to support and nurture our students by understanding who they are, what they bring to the College and what they need to realize their great potential as fulfilled individuals, responsible citizens and public leaders.

We believe that our emphasis on open-hearted and open-minded relationships—with peers who become friends, colleagues and collaborators (sometimes for life); with faculty who challenge and inspire; with staff who care deeply about our community—will continue to be the soul of the educational experience and the campus culture. The ever-expanding breadth of perspectives, experiences and ideas at Bates will only deepen the meaningfulness and sustainability of an intellectual community built on this foundation of friendship and mutual responsibility. Our facilities and environmental features will be means to these ends, as we continue to plan and build “for coming time” (in the words of Oren Cheney) by developing campus spaces that intentionally support and express our mission. In this spirit of looking forward, let’s imagine how Bates might look in the near future as our projects begin to have an impact on all our constituencies. Then we will consider more specific outcomes arising from the conversations of the last two years.

## THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

As a result of the College’s adaptation and innovation in key areas, students will more fully and confidently experience and embrace the interconnectedness of the world. This will flow from greater intentionality in directing the integration of a resolutely traditional academic experience with emerging modes of practical, experienced-based learning. Students will have more and more appropriate support tailored to their specific needs for the development of skills and, more importantly character—that mostly indefinable quality of an individual which is revealed in both thought and action.

Opportunities will abound to develop collaborative skills and habits. Students will live together in a variety of well-designed settings where they will learn with and from others, like and unlike themselves. Here they will learn to work in groups to produce an outcome or solve a problem; form and use operational, personal and strategic networks; seek out and value multiple

and contradictory perspectives; and move outside their comfort zone to embrace difficulty and difference.

When students graduate from Bates, their skills will be seen as highly marketable and adaptable to a variety of professional settings. Students will also be prepared to move beyond the fragmentation of knowledge and be able to synthesize, adapt and innovate. All students will develop a degree of scientific and quantitative literacy; all will be challenged and inspired to explore, express and enhance their creativity through the arts broadly defined. They will know how to access knowledge and use it, even as they will have confronted the limitations of our understanding. They will have a sense of purpose and responsibility to something bigger than self.

## THE FACULTY EXPERIENCE

FACULTY, TOO, WILL benefit as Bates becomes an even stronger destination for building an excellent academic career. Faculty will find a community of scholars to challenge and inspire them, and abundant institutional support for their most ambitious scholarly goals. Teaching at Bates will be seen as transformative for two reasons—working with the kind of students who choose Bates, and having the support of our new curricular and co-curricular structures. These two factors will enrich the breadth and depth of our faculty’s scholarly lives and intellectual development.

### A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

PREPARES INDIVIDUALS TO REALIZE

THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE

WORLD TODAY, AND HOW ACTION/INACTION

IN ONE PART OF THE WORLD CAN LEAD

TO A SERIES OF EVENTS IN OTHER PARTS

OF THE WORLD. AS A RESULT, WE NEED

TO ACT WITH CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT

TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS.

*—A Bates faculty member*

Faculty will have a chance to develop and lead ongoing pedagogical and curricular innovations associated with technology, globalization, interdisciplinarity, experiential learning, and diversity and inclusion. In addition, they will have ample opportunities to work with each other across disciplines and with members of the staff to identify—and solve—scholarly, pedagogical and institutional challenges. Like students, they will feel connected, eager to form and use operational, personal and strategic networks to advance knowledge and improve the educational experience.

## STAFF, ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

MEMBERS OF THE Bates staff will recognize the distinctive part they play in building the educational community. In direct support of classroom teaching and research, in the administration of programs, in service of our material needs, and in informal interactions with all parts of the campus community, members of the Bates staff will know and value the fact that their work with students, faculty and each other makes a difference in the world.

Beyond the immediate campus, our projects will increase the value of future investment in Bates by trustees, alumni, donors and other supporters as they understand the College's proactive role in addressing key educational and social problems. They will become energized by our choices, focus and progress. Through Bates and as representatives of Bates, they will contribute to the work of upholding public values that matter—yoking ethical principles to professional lives, redefining success as having more to do with leading the well-examined life than with the accumulation of power and status. They will understand that they, too, represent Bates—that they are connected and important to the meaning of Bates at its fullest, and that Bates is in the end no more or less than the sum of all the people it has reached and influenced.

All of our supporters, internal and external, will be part of an exemplary partnership. Our donors and volunteers will embody the enormous and unique power of private philanthropy coupled with service and volunteer activity to underwrite educational excellence and literally sustain the infrastructure of this nation's educational system. They will understand that places like Bates are indispensable to the future of the world and that their support is indispensable to the future of Bates. They will understand and enjoy their part in telling the stories of Bates more widely and clearly.

One story can be told right now. Bates is becoming even more resourceful in these difficult times. The planning process and the recommendations contained in this report show our increasing capacity and determination to manage in a new way—investing in core assets, aligning resources and mission even more deliberately, understanding and attending to the environment in which we operate, managing competition more mindfully by concentrating on things we do best and making sure we are doing them even better, and responding to the need for more accountability and transparency. At the same time, what follows can reflect only some of the many exciting ideas and aspirations that will continue to grow so abundantly in all we do.

## RE-ENVISIONING THE LIBERAL ARTS AT BATES

THE CONSUMERIST MENTALITY and mistaken assumptions about the value of a liberal arts education are only two of the challenges faced by small colleges like Bates today. Another complex issue relates to demographic realities.

In a recent survey, admission officers at liberal arts colleges named demographic factors, access and affordability, and economic uncertainty as the three greatest challenges they face (Financial Uncertainty and the Admissions Class of Fall 2008, 2008).

Other studies support these concerns. Between 2000 and 2020, the number of non-Hispanic white high school graduates will decline by 11 percent, while the number of Hispanic high school graduates will increase by 54 percent. This means that in 2020, students from currently under-represented racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups will outnumber white students on college campuses for the first time. However, although women and students from these groups accounted for significant enrollment growth from 1995 to 2005, Hispanic students remain underrepresented at graduation. Of students from underrepresented groups who enroll in college, only 47 percent of Hispanic students and

41 percent of African American students graduate within six years, compared to 59 percent of white students (Hoover, 2008; Schmidt, 2008; The College of 2020, 2009).

Compounding these trends are the financial challenges faced by many families from currently underrepresented groups. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2007), 91 percent of high school students from families earning more than \$100,000 enroll in college, while the enrollment rate for families earning from \$50,001 to \$100,000 is 78 percent. The enrollment rate for families earning \$20,000 or less is 52 percent, and many families from

I SUSPECT SOME OF THE THINGS THAT MAKE  
BATES STAND OUT AMONG OUR PEERS ARE  
THE SAME THINGS THAT WILL SERVE BATES  
AND OUR STUDENTS WELL IN THE CURRENT  
ECONOMIC SITUATION AND IN THE FUTURE.  
TWO THINGS THAT MAKE BATES UNIQUE ARE  
OUR COMMITMENT TO SERVICE-LEARNING  
ACTIVITIES AND OUR COMMITMENT TO  
BASIC-LEVEL RESEARCH; BOTH OF THESE  
ARE OFTEN HIGHLIGHTED IN OUR STUDENTS'  
THESIS PROJECTS.

—A faculty member in the social sciences

underrepresented groups are in this low-income bracket (The College of 2020, 2009).

If these trends persist, liberal arts colleges will face several challenges. In addition to needing the resources and programs that help students from different racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups apply, enroll and succeed in college, the institutions will need to offer more and more financial aid to make attendance possible. These trends cause concern for Bates and other colleges that have yet to understand or experience the full influence of the changes.

Understandably, we have concerns about the fall-out from the new economic realities—as does every college in the U.S. that has seen the need for financial aid rise while endowments and philanthropy have declined. Yet Bates remains on solid footing because of a long tradition of broad input and sound management practices. Considering that we have the lowest endowment per student among our academic peers and the highest selectivity and academic reputation among our financial peers, we can take great pride in our accomplishments. Yet the gap between our own ambitions and the strength of our peers, on the one hand, and our revenue from the endowment and the annual fund on the other, compounds the pressure of expanding the mission and managing the costs.

The economic situation does ensure that we no longer attempt business as usual. Before current conditions became clear, higher education was inclined to change through addition rather than replacement. Because it is very difficult for colleges and universities to curtail programs or practices, over the last several decades many changes occurred by leaving an ineffective unit in place, walling it off, and inventing other ways to accomplish an end. And for decades, this approach has served institutions well. By evolving carefully and for the most part incrementally, the American academy has achieved and retained its distinction as the best in the world. Now that such an approach is no longer possible or advisable, we at Bates are *using* our opportunity to do things differently. Rather than create new positions or add bureaucratic layers,

BATES PRODUCES GRADUATES WHO ARE ABLE TO SOLVE BIG WORLD PROBLEMS BECAUSE THEY HAVE THE COURAGE TO DISAGREE AND LOOK FOR NEW SOLUTIONS. THIS IS UNIQUE IN THE WORLD THAT LOOKS INCREASINGLY AT THE BOTTOM LINE. BY HELPING BRIDGE BATES STUDENTS' TRANSITION INTO THE REAL WORLD WE BETTER PREPARE THEM TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGES TO THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY.

—A Bates staff member

we are looking for “content and substance—for big ideas that fit the big picture,” in the words of higher education researcher Dick Chait (Trusteeship, 2009)—and for just the right ways to achieve them.

Fortunately, restless innovation is a characteristic of Bates faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni and other supporters who strive to take any pursuit to the highest possible level. We are what some call a learning organization—one that welcomes and leverages the forces of uncertainty and challenge. Particularly as we look forward to the changes in higher education looming large in the present and future, our creative response to change, new ideas and new ways of doing things will be critical.

Cool thinking and careful choosing will also mark our work. Our aim is to remake the liberal arts college for this still new century by deeply integrating our learning practices and strengthening the ways we work and interact with each other and with the world. This report and the planning processes that have led to it call for members of the Bates community to bridge the academic and administrative silos that have helped define us and create a more effective web of relationships, academic programs and informal learning opportunities at Bates. In the sections of the report that follow, we examine the goals, steps and processes by which this work can be carried out.

## GOALS AND PROCESS

THE PLANNING PROCESS revealed certain ideas that are critical to upholding Bates’ mission in the years ahead and identified more emphasis on networking and collaboration as a specific way to reach our goals. In the areas of arts, science and math, and learning across the entire Bates’ experience, we see the potential for a deeper integration of ideas and practices that build on Bates’ strengths as an excellent learning environment and an egalitarian community. While other parts of the Bates experience are just as important, we believe an investment in these areas at this time has the greatest potential for strengthening the substance of our offerings and supporting more powerful collaborations among faculty, students, administrators, alumni, board members and the community.

The intense work that underpins this plan is rooted in a broadly shared community process. For the past two years, faculty, staff, students and trustees have been working together to guide the planning process. Open communication has been a key element and has included community meetings; presentations to departments, divisions, programs and trustees; and a *Planning at Bates* website (<http://www.bates.edu/x173769.xml>) and newsletter as venues for sharing ideas.

The project began in fall 2007 when the community took up a highly interactive and inclusive process of strategic thinking at Bates. The first step was a series of small group conversations held in September 2007 with approximately 175 faculty, staff and students. A Steering Group made up of faculty (including two members of PIPAC, an elected committee), senior staff and students was created to assist in analyzing the data and guiding the work as it went forward. The Steering Group framed the next stages of the process by appointing Working Groups to explore four themes that emerged from the small group conversations.

WE LIKE WHO WE ARE, BUT WE ARE NOT  
COMPLACENT OR FINISHED WITH OUR  
BECOMING. WE GRATEFULLY WELCOME  
NEWCOMERS TO JOIN A WORK IN PROGRESS.

—*President Hansen at Convocation,  
Fall 2007*

The Working Groups met throughout winter and spring 2008, holding small meetings and three open sessions to gather feedback to the ideas they were exploring. That summer, the Working Groups explained their conclusions in a report that included four guiding principles, 39 issues and 87 recommendations.

Based on those findings, the Steering Group identified the need for three types of action. They asked administrative leaders to coordinate progress on recommendations that needed staff leadership or follow-through on works in progress by governance structures; designated several recommendations for more in-depth study; and articulated three major initiatives for intensive work: Learning at Bates, the Natural Sciences and Mathematics in the Liberal Arts, and the Arts in the College and Community.

In October 2008, the Steering Group named Campus Teams to take the initiatives forward. Co-chaired by a faculty member and an administrative leader, those teams guided the year's work. Part of each team's process included intense consultation with faculty, staff and students individually, in small groups and in open forums to develop ideas and explain their progress. In April 2009, each initiative team submitted a report with recommendations for consideration.

All this work revealed not only our ambition for the College, but three distinct elements of the restless spirit that defines Bates—eagerness to make more of our parts by integrating our strengths and advantages, willingness to improve our internal arrangements and practices, and clarity about the innovations and growth our aspirations require.



Two sets of studies provide a practical way to think about planning in our environment. In the “University as Global City” Susan Frost<sup>1</sup> and Rebecca Chopp (2004) remind us to look inside the College, not outward, for the source of authentic, sustainable change. According to their research and experience, we need to encourage bursts of intellectual energy and grow organically, “guiding the evolution and reinforcing the passions of participants.” Administrative structures should be helpful, light and flexible.

In “Humble Decision Making,” Amitai Etzioni (1989) warns of the dangers of rational decision making (incrementalism, full speed ahead, rational ritualism) and recommends a process that involves two sets of judgments: broad fundamental choices about, for example, what to preserve and what to transform, and then partial steps toward the direction of change, checking outcomes and revising course as needed.

The approach these experts recommend to us is both reassuring and challenging. The challenge is that a college is a loosely coupled organization, with the parts related but not necessarily dependent on each other. Departments often feel they have little stake in what other departments are doing. Faculty receive some of their highest honors and recognition from their disciplinary affiliations, which sometimes compete with institutional relationships.

Now is the time to draw on the borders of our departments and other structures and turn them into seams. For example, finding new ways to engage the passion faculty and staff bring to their disciplinary affiliations in College-wide projects could encourage internal change that would advantage teaching and learning at Bates. Such an approach would add to the substance of the educational experience—to the content of the disciplines—while re-energizing the intellectual culture of the College.

Building on the collaborative work we have begun, we intend to go beyond the simple branding of a strategic plan and marketing campaign and embrace a process that by its very definition is intense, messy, energetic, passionate and rigorous—and one that offers the most promise for these complicated times. We also see this dynamic environment of sharing and collaborating, of crossing traditional divides, as providing a powerful model to our students—a real-world tool that increases their capacity for similar kinds of interaction they will put into practice during their years on campus and over the course of their lives.

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<sup>1</sup>Susan Frost served as consultant to Bates during the planning process. For more about her work, see <http://www.susanfrostconsulting.com>.

**TABLE 2 | BATES' STRATEGIC PROCESS**  
FALL 2007 – FALL 2009

STEPS	PURPOSE	OUTCOMES	DATES
President Hansen initiates conversations with faculty, staff and students in small groups. Invitees are chosen at random.	Explore what is great about Bates and how the College can be even greater with a wide array of community members who inform thinking about the future.	Data to inform and guide strategic thinking for the future; wide participation by community members in the first phase of the work.	September 2007
A Steering Group is named and begins work. In due time the Steering Group names Working Groups through an open nomination process and later approves members of Campus Teams.	Engage the insight and experience of faculty, senior staff and other administrators, and students in guiding the strategic process.	Develop themes from small group conversation data; appoint Working Groups to pursue the most significant themes; review reports; and determine details of the strategic process and next steps.	October 2007 – Present
Bates launches the <i>Planning at Bates</i> website and newsletter.	Communicating systematically with the entire community about the ongoing strategic work.	Open communication with the campus community and systematic news about the progress of the strategic work.	November 2007 – Present
President Hansen and the Trustees review data from the small group conversations and discuss next steps.	Hold creative conversations about data from small group conversations and explore implementation of the strategic process.	Create four working groups and charges for each group based on findings and themes from data and feedback from Trustees.	January 2008
The four Working Groups meet weekly; chairs meet weekly to coordinate the teams' work.	Develop findings and recommendations by conducting research and communicating with faculty, students and staff.	Report to President including guiding principles, 39 issues and 87 recommendations. President and Steering Group divide those into administrative action, topics for further planning and three major initiatives.	January – August 2008
President Hansen and the co-chairs of the Working Groups discuss the year's work with the Trustees.	Review the principles and recommendations the groups offered and prepare for the next phases of the strategic process.	Draw on Trustee feedback to inform campus discussions and take forward the Working Groups' report. Revised Working Group report submitted in June.	May – June 2008

**TABLE 2 | BATES' STRATEGIC PROCESS**FALL 2007 – FALL 2009 *(continued)*

STEPS	PURPOSE	OUTCOMES	DATES
Campus Teams are appointed to pursue major initiatives in learning, science and math, and arts.	Consult with departments, offices and members of the community to develop a vision, concrete plans and action steps for the College and Board to consider.	Open interaction with community about research, data and recommendations at each stage of process. Further data collected about steps forward on each initiative.	September 2008 – May 2009
President Hansen and the Trustees discuss progress from the Working Groups' report.	Explore the Working Groups' recommendations and broader changes that are influencing liberal education.	Trustees provide feedback on report findings and the next steps in the process.	October 2008
The campus and the Trustees review the outcomes of the Working Groups' findings and discuss next steps in the strategic process.	Introduce items for administrative action, further planning and initiatives in Learning, Science and Math, and Arts.	Open communication with and feedback from Trustees about phases of the strategic process and gather advice about next steps.	January 2009
Campus Teams form plans for action on Learning, Science and Math, and Arts.	Vet preliminary plans with the community before final reports are submitted	Recommend action steps for each initiative and issue reports to the Trustees for discussion at their May 2009 meeting.	May 2009
President Hansen and the Trustees review the reports of the Campus Teams.	Present and discuss findings and recommendations. Seek insight and guidance during meetings and at other times as needed or required.	Continue collaboration with Trustees concerning Bates future, preparing the way for productive fundraising and other resource support.	May 2009
President Hansen uses the Teams' plans and all preliminary work to develop the College-wide plan.	Propose one plan for consideration of the community. Vet the plan and prepare final draft for the Trustees.	Forward motion in strategic areas that also builds the foundation for major funding initiatives.	June – October 2009

# COLLEGE-WIDE PRIORITIES

THE PRIORITIES in this section are guided by our aspirations and underlying principles, and by an ongoing critical assessment of our assets. These priorities, while not intended to reflect the range of special emphases at Bates, have their genesis in the many conversations among community members that shaped this strategic process, including discussions in the Steering Group and ideas that were presented in the Working Groups’ reports.

As the reports noted, the principles and goals of an institution stimulate imagination and encourage the exploration of ideas, places and relationships across the College and beyond. Bates has long embodied the principles of creative inquiry; diversity, inclusion and community engagement; and open communication, critical reflection and constructive action. These principles helped shape several important College-wide priorities that are designed to ensure that the whole Bates experience—curricular learning; residential experience; diverse student, faculty and staff population; extracurricular enterprises; travel abroad—cultivates the private, personal development of the individual student as well as produces a more informed, ethically responsible citizenry. Student engagement takes on new meaning when every activity is about cultivating focus and bringing passion and intensity to the full range of one’s work.

TABLE 3   UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES IDENTIFIED by the 2007-08 WORKING GROUPS
<p><i>Our aspirations are guided by our underlying principles and by an ongoing critical assessment of our assets.</i></p> <p><b>PRINCIPLE 1</b>   Bates is committed to creative, adventurous and rigorous inquiry in a mutually supportive community of teaching, learning and scholarship.</p> <p><b>PRINCIPLE 2</b>   Building on its history, Bates aspires to be a pluralistic and egalitarian community.</p> <p><b>PRINCIPLE 3</b>   Bates affirms that community life and civic engagement on campus and beyond are vital dimensions of teaching, learning and research at the College.</p> <p><b>PRINCIPLE 4</b>   Bates is committed to ongoing, critical and constructive reflection on how we practice the values that we profess, and we seek creative ways to realize those principles more fully in action.</p> <p><b>PRINCIPLE 5</b>   Bates is committed to open communication as a necessary condition for creating shared knowledge, deepening understanding, facilitating new experiences and living according to its principles.</p>

Because searching for and retaining the top faculty scholar-teachers in the nation are so critical to the fundamental enterprise of Bates, we believe that we should use every hiring opportunity to increase the excellence, depth and diversity of the faculty. We will continue to seek and support ways to meet the goals of our faculty compensation plan and do all we can to position the departments to identify promising multicultural candidates three to five years before openings occur. Specific strategies include funds for travel to conferences and meetings with promising graduate students and for bringing promising candidates to campus for talks and seminars. We also propose to support early overlap appointments to allow a department to bring a new hire to campus a year or two in advance of a full vacancy and recruiting and retention efforts that include more aggressive start-up funds, reduced first-year teaching loads and additional funds for travel as needed.

To increase support for existing faculty, we seek to intensify our investment in the intellectual vitality and educational excellence on which a flourishing academic community depends. Strategies include increasing our capacity to retain and promote our scholar-teachers across the full array of disciplines and adding to sources of flexible support for their wide-ranging needs. We also aim to encourage new modes of scholarly activity and develop new ways to recognize individual circumstances and stages of career development.

TABLE 4   COLLEGE-WIDE PRIORITIES	
PRIORITY 1	Use every hiring opportunity to increase the excellence, depth and diversity of the faculty.
PRIORITY 2	Take specific steps to support, expand and promote the wide range of faculty work upon which the intellectual vitality and continuing educational excellence of a flourishing academic community depends.
PRIORITY 3	Charge the Office of Communications and Media Relations to work with the academic departments and other administrative offices to present Bates to various audiences completely and forcefully. Engage faculty, staff and students to advise on this key function and use new technologies to employ the social networks that students, prospective students and parents are using.
PRIORITY 4	Build on the energy and resources we have invested in environmental friendliness and continue to be a national leader in environmental action.
PRIORITY 5	Deepen our engagement with the kind of team approaches to leadership that enabled this plan. Use similar ways to implement the ideas and practices we advocate in this document.

Support for faculty who want to follow ideas wherever they lead is one clear mark of an excellent academic environment. We aim to provide resources for those who wish to update teaching methods or learn about new technologies to advance pedagogy or scholarship, or to improve communications and educational community building. We also intend to intensify our commitment to connecting scholar-teachers both within the campus community and with external colleagues and professional activities, and to boosting support for those who seek external grants for scholarship or pedagogical innovation.

Recognizing that communication is critical to our visibility, reputation and prestige, staff in the Office of Communications and Media Relations (CMR) will need to collaborate extensively with academic departments and other administrative offices to present a full, dynamic sense of Bates to various audiences. Other objectives in this area include charging CMR to engage faculty, staff and students to advise on this key function, and build on new technologies to employ the social networks that students, prospective students and parents are using.

In addition, we support the College's efforts to sustain and advance our highly regarded emphasis on environmental responsibility. Our goal is to build a sustainable community through outreach and education on important issues like climate change, resource valuation and conservation. For over a decade Bates has worked to provide the tools faculty, staff and students need to reduce our environmental footprint by conserving energy and promoting renewable energy, alternative transportation, recycling and green procurement.

Sustainable design, for example, is an important aspect of our physical plant, and Bates has adopted the LEED Silver level as a minimum standard for all new construction and renovations. Similarly, programs to reduce our high needs for transportation include bringing the first Zipcars to Maine, van pooling and GEM cars for on-campus use. In March 2007, Bates adopted the President's Climate Commitment, pledging Bates to work towards carbon neutrality, a move that will require long-term technical, policy and behavioral changes. As noted in the Three-Year Sustainability Plan developed in 2007, while we have improved the College's environmental performance and won national recognition for several programs, there is significant work to do. Among other things, we need to coordinate and manage programs across campus, emphasize greater personal responsibility and accountability, and promote sustainability in all levels of decision-making. We are pleased to underscore our emphasis on those objectives.

Last year we also pursued this priority with a College-wide focus on food. Inspired by our new Commons building and an anonymous gift, we asked: Where does food come from? How does it get here? What's in it? Who grew it? Who sets the price, and who gets the money? Understanding that more

and more Americans are questioning the food they eat, our goal was to learn more about how we as a society nourish our bodies and our minds. Through seminars, lectures and shared meals, the College came together and learned more about what it means to share the same campus home. We also adopted healthier choices for the dining hall—including our very popular vegan bar! This emphasis goes to the heart of Bates' educational mission as a residential undergraduate liberal arts college.

The College's leadership in environmental action and sustainability has been recognized nationally. For example, in 2009, *Princeton Review* named Bates to its Green Honor Roll, placing it among the top 15 schools in the U.S. in terms of environmental friendliness. The College also appears on *Sierra* magazine's third annual list of the 20 greenest (or "most eco-enlightened") colleges and universities, based on the results of a questionnaire sent to sustainability experts at hundreds of institutions across the country. Most recently, Bates College Dining Services was recognized by the Hobart Center for Food Service Sustainability with a \$5,000 grant and by *University Business* magazine for having the country's best self-operated dining program.

We enjoin Bates to continue to invest in action and advocacy that contribute to a healthier environment and promote new energy sources and green design. In stressing this priority, we are mindful that sustainability is fast becoming one component of competitive advantage. "Sustainability isn't the burden on bottom lines that many executives believe it to be," writes management strategist C. K. Prahalad and his collaborators (2009). "In fact, becoming environment-friendly can lower your costs and increase your revenues. That's why sustainability should be a touchstone for all innovation. . . . In the future, only companies that make sustainability a goal will achieve competitive advantage."

Just as sustainability efforts require group engagement to be effective, we see this same spirit at work in forging a new kind of collaborative community, with departments, programs and individuals who take more responsibility to think institutionally about the future. This way of interacting laid the foundation for the planning process behind this report, and it should continue to mark Bates in the future. For example, arts faculty and staff are long accustomed to collaborating for the advancement of the arts as a whole. Months before the actual planning group met, an informal Arts Steering Committee convened to promote advocacy and visibility for the arts; dialogues held across campus encouraged curricular and co-curricular support and programming; and students gained a stronger voice in helping determine the landscape for the arts. The Learning Initiative Team met regularly in four groups to work on proposals related to faculty research, diversity and inclusion, the Learning Commons and the learning environment. Each group prepared an inventory of suggestions made by members of the Bates community during the last few years and

selected those that would do the most to enhance the learning experience for everyone. The group then incorporated the advice and suggestions of the community to develop its priorities. Now it is time to recognize those efforts and take steps to institutionalize the gains those ways of working have achieved.

## PLANNING INITIATIVES

THREE PRIMARY INITIATIVES on the sciences, the arts and learning have captured the attention of the College for more than a year. The science and math group facilitated discussions among faculty by holding two division meetings and many small group discussions. The first division meeting was a brainstorming session during which ideas, projects and issues that might shape the initiative were organized into three categories: science and math curriculum innovation, faculty-student scholarship, and facilities. The group began by focusing on the curriculum in its broadest sense: goals for students, courses and associated laboratory components, and student research experiences. For two months faculty from biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics met regularly to identify ways to improve collaboration on curricular design and implementation. Now those discussions are influencing further collaborations within the division and beyond.

The arts group brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including faculty and staff from all areas and disciplines within the College, Bates Dance Festival, Museum of Art, Harvard Center for Community Partnerships, Office of Advancement, Office of Admissions, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Bates-Morse Mountain Conservation Area and the Bates Coastal Center at Shortridge, Bates College Imaging and Computing Center, Information and Library Services, and student representatives. Clear needs were identified in the areas of organizational leadership, faculty and staff investment, support from Admissions and Advancement, communications and facilities.

WE HAVE THREE INITIATIVES FOR  
THE CAMPUS TO TAKE UP AS A NEXT STEP  
IN THE PLANNING PROCESS. CAMPUS TEAMS  
ARE APPOINTED TO CONSULT WIDELY WITH  
MEMBERS OF THE RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS  
AND THE WHOLE COMMUNITY AS THEY  
DEVELOP PLANS THAT WILL HAVE  
WIDE-RANGING EFFECT ON THE COLLEGE.  
THE TRUSTEES ANTICIPATE THESE PLANS  
EAGERLY AND LOOK FORWARD TO SUPPORTING  
THE RECOMMENDATIONS THEY RECEIVE.

—President Hansen  
to the Community,  
Summer 2008



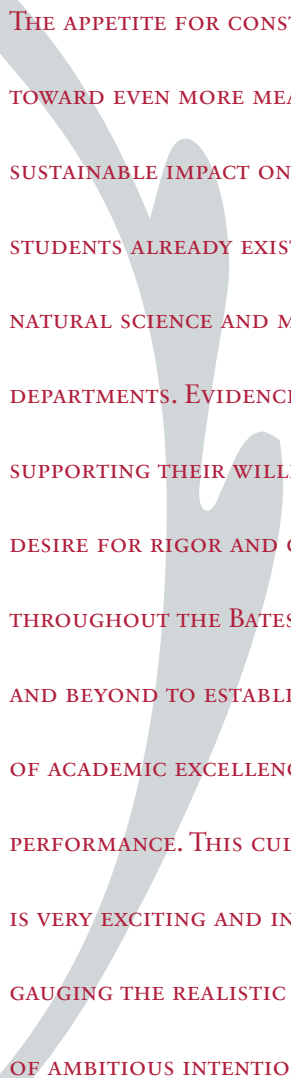
The Learning Initiative Team brought together faculty from across disciplines as well as the Dean of Students; the Associate Dean of the Faculty; and representatives from the Educational Policy Committee, the President's office, the Facilities Master-planning Committee and the Library to create a strategic plan for issues around learning at Bates. Because each initiative derives power and sustainability more from the collective insight of many community members than administrative directive, we believe they will thrive and last. More specifically, however, each initiative takes us deeper into our mission and at the same time extends our reach and enlarges the relevance and impact of our purposes.

As previously explained, faculty groups began meeting to address individual initiatives involving arts, sciences and math, and learning in 2008. In the sections below, we summarize the issues involved in each initiative and consider goals.

## **STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION, CURRICULUM AND LEADERSHIP IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCES**

THE INITIATIVES involving the arts and sciences and math strengthen different ways of knowing and collaborating in an intellectually ambitious and well-rounded community. To develop each initiative, faculty and staff consulted widely and thought carefully about how to infuse these important areas of the liberal arts more deeply into the curriculum and the life of the College. Each group considered ways to reach an increasingly diverse student population, for example, by expanding arts programs and by broadening the scope of the science curriculum, respectively.

For the purposes of this plan, we consider the arts and sciences together for several reasons. Each represents a cornerstone of the “liberal arts and sciences” model as we know it today. We now use *arts* far differently than in the oldest sense of the *liberal arts*, where it once meant higher-order skills that belonged to the “liberated” and educated classes. By bringing the arts into parity with sciences and math, by countering the popular misconception science is practical and productive while the arts are decorative or frivolous, we intend to put the two ways of knowing and creating on the same level. After all, each underscores the increasing importance of hands-on learning and interaction with the material world, and each demonstrates the power of integrated knowledge. As one faculty member said during a discussion, “Art and science have their meeting point in method.” Although we sometimes think of art in terms of the individual artist, the work frequently depends more on collaborative, group work and experimentation. The Imaging Center is a pre-existing model of what it might mean to think of the arts and sciences as having some parallels and intersections; the Center is described as “expand[ing] the ways student and faculty can exercise their visual presentation skills, which have become as much the scientist’s preserve as the artist’s.” Interestingly, University College London is just one academic institution that has a discussion forum



THE APPETITE FOR CONSTRUCTIVE CHANGE  
TOWARD EVEN MORE MEANINGFUL AND  
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STUDENTS ALREADY EXISTS WITHIN THE  
NATURAL SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS  
DEPARTMENTS. EVIDENCE ABOUNDS  
SUPPORTING THEIR WILLINGNESS AND  
DESIRE FOR RIGOR AND COLLABORATION  
THROUGHOUT THE BATES COMMUNITY  
AND BEYOND TO ESTABLISH NEW STANDARDS  
OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN METHODS AND  
PERFORMANCE. THIS CULTURAL DYNAMIC  
IS VERY EXCITING AND INSPIRING TO THOSE  
GAUGING THE REALISTIC POTENTIAL  
OF AMBITIOUS INTENTIONS.

—A Trustee commenting on the  
*Science and Math Initiative*

devoted to these parallels and intersections, called Tesla after inventor Nikola Tesla, in which the synergy is described this way: “The convergence of art and science happens mainly in the realms of creativity, vision, and intuition, in all of which Tesla excelled. Both artists and scientists are concerned with understanding the world and our existence within it, although the view of the scientist is essentially collective, being rooted in consensus and the pursuit of objectivity” (UCL, 2009).

In terms of the planning process, we began by envisioning three initiatives, then came to the realization that the two groups—arts and science and math—have more in common with each other than with the Learning Initiative, which we also decided to develop in a different way, by subdividing its elements rather than combining them.

At Bates, arts programs unleash the creative potential of our students and faculty, keeping the College relevant to a new generation of students and set of circumstances in the world. Arts faculty in music, creative writing, theater, visual art, dance and related fields such as film studies are central to the liberal arts mission of critical inquiry, enlightenment and transformative practice. Faculty from across disciplines and with a wealth of expertise in performance, production, criticism and theory make real Bates’ mission to live and learn in a vibrant, intellectual and engaged learning community. The curators and staff of the Museum of Art exemplify the intensity of the examination and discovery processes practiced here, playing a pivotal role in the College and off campus through ambitious and creative exhibitions and programming. The arts help our graduates compose “lives of meaning and integrity,” as emphasized in a

WE NEED TO CELEBRATE AND ENRICH THIS  
ARTS-IN-THE-LIBERAL-ARTS ENVIRONMENT.

OUR CURRENT STUDENTS SEEK A CULTURE  
THAT RECOGNIZES THE VALUE OF THE ARTS,  
THAT PUSHES PEOPLE TO THINK IN INVENTIVE  
WAYS AND THAT TAKES ON THE KINDS  
OF CHALLENGES THE ARTS PROVIDE.

—A faculty member in theater

liberal arts education “develop a student’s ability to collect and organize facts and opinions, to analyze them and weigh their value and to articulate an argument. . .” (Cech, 1999).

Science and math faculty are retooling the curriculum by focusing on the process of discovery and practice in their disciplines. Students who probe engaging questions and think across boundaries that once separated disciplines are emulating the best practice of many top labs, where collaboration is routine among scientists who are trained in different fields. Liberal arts colleges have a distinguished track record in developing scientists, as an analysis from the 1990s shows. The study revealed that baccalaureate colleges are about twice as productive as research universities in training students who go on to get PhDs. A nurturing environment, low student-faculty ratio, faculty who are involved in labs as well as classes and courses that promote cross-training by emphasizing humanities and arts are among the success factors the study recognized (Cech, 1999).

The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology has recently suggested that integrated, team-taught introductory courses should be offered to all students, not just majors, and that a summer or more of research experience significantly increases students’ understanding of how to approach real problems and improves their research technique (“The Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Major and Liberal Education,” 2009). This reflects current practice at Bates, where faculty members and students collaborate on research throughout the year, shaping senior capstone experiences, one-on-one independent study, and course design and pedagogy. Science and math faculty members now recommend that increasing support for summer research projects for faculty and students is vital to enriching the division’s culture of shared investigation.

recent report by the AAC&U entitled “Liberal Education & America’s Promise” (2007).

Just as importantly, science and math allow students the wherewithal to deal with a broad range of critical questions, from the environment and health care to the scientific implications involved in religion, politics and many other 21st century challenges. Curricula for sciences and math that are tightly woven into the fabric of a rigorous

This need for increasing support is equally or more evident in arts programming, which also faces significant challenges in today's economy. Across the U.S., art programs have been viewed as low-hanging fruit in the budget-cutting process. A recent article in *The New York Times* described steep cuts across higher education, such as the elimination of the department of theater arts and dance at Washington State and a 14 percent drop over the next two years in the \$1.2 million budget of Wesleyan University's Center for the Arts, which supports four departments (dance, music, theater and visual arts) (Cohen, 2009).

Earlier this year Brandeis announced its intentions to sell off its world-class art collection, causing a furor among scholars (the university is now reconsidering its plans). Extreme actions like this, as well as the kind of cutbacks seen in K-12 education, reinforce the message by Shirley Tilghman, president of Princeton University, who said, "If universities were to withdraw support, the arts would collapse in the U.S."

In light of these challenges, it is even more important to build up the arts curriculum at Bates with new energy, practices and resources. According to data from the College Board and ACT, student interest in the arts has risen dramatically in the last decade or so (Capricciosa, 2006). From 1996 to 2005, interest among high school seniors in majoring in visual and performing arts increased 44 percent, and 34 percent more students expressed interest in majoring in an arts area. A thriving arts program challenges and inspires students to experiment and take risks while also becoming more engaged in undergraduate research. "The blank canvas, sheet music, script, fabric, floor plan, musical instrument, and voice are all examples of the mechanisms these students use to carry out their creative activity" (Reinventing Undergraduate Education, 2003).

Collaborative arts initiatives are underway at other institutions. In 2008, a faculty task force at Harvard called for "an ambitious rethinking of the place of arts practice." The group echoed a concern by Bates faculty that when we turn away students from art classes, we "reinforce the message that a serious curricular engagement with the arts should be reserved for a tiny cohort, and we direct all others to the broad and playful sphere of the extracurricular" (Harvard Task Force on the Arts, 2008).

Also in 2008, the undergraduate college of Emory University launched the Center for Creativity and the Arts to increase visibility, integrate programming and support special projects by faculty, staff and students. As part of its vision to create a "consciously creative campus," Carleton College is raising funds for an Arts Union. Designed to prompt inventiveness, the union will occupy a renovated space on campus that houses studio art, art history, cinema and media studies, theater, dance and a teaching museum. Other features include

a technology resource center, a learning center, social space and production support (Arts Union News & Updates, 2009).

The Bates arts plan seeks robust support for more collaborative productions—dance, visual art and new media, music and theater—to join these and other leading colleges and universities in promoting an environment that is more open to different ways of thinking about the world. When Richard Florida (2002), author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, describes a “super-creative” class, he could be describing future generations of Bates students, individuals who “produce new forms or designs that are readily transferable and broadly useful—such as designing a product that can be widely made, sold and used; coming up with a theorem or strategy that can be applied in many cases; or composing music that can be performed again and again” (Florida, 2002).

At Bates, we envision an Arts Collaborative that will be attuned to our liberal arts mission and work well across disciplines and campus/community borders to sustain, enhance and coordinate the vitality and visibility of the arts. We propose that the first steps are to conduct a pilot phase to inform our long-term approach and define an effective leadership model. We could use a form of shared leadership to guide this project. Based on that experience, we imagine forming an Arts Collaborative with official status, sufficient resources and a clear charge to integrate practice, pedagogy and advocacy across programs;

OUR STUDENTS IN THE ARTS WANT MORE  
STUDENTS WHO ARE LIKE THEM, FRIENDS  
LIKE THEM. THEY NEED A COMMUNITY.

—A faculty member in theater

THERE SHOULD BE MORE INTERACTION  
BETWEEN THE ARTS COMMUNITY WITH THE  
REST OF THE COLLEGE AND EVEN WITHIN THE  
ARTS COMMUNITY. EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW  
EVERYONE ELSE WHO’S INVOLVED.

—A student majoring in theater

infuse the residential learning community with arts awareness and opportunities; extend the reach of the arts more fully across the entire campus and the community; and guide future efforts to improve facilities.

In addition, we will attract and retain top teachers and scholars with expertise in critical arts areas with the aims of fostering interdisciplinary activity, preparing students for a wide array of arts professions, and infusing the College with ingenuity and experimentation. Renovation of facilities will also be considered, including the feasibility of using the Chapel as a performance or

rehearsal venue. In the next phase of the master plan, opportunities will exist for more space for art studios, rehearsal spaces and storage, exhibits and readings and performances. As the facilities planning process goes forward, we will be mindful of the needs of the arts. In the near term, we will consider the advantage of bringing performance areas into buildings we are renovating or designing in the next phases of the Campus Master Plan, thus reaching more students and taking fuller advantage of Bates as a residential community where the arts are part of one's daily life.

BUILDINGS SHAPE OUR INTERACTIONS  
AND INFLUENCE HOW WE TEACH AND DO  
RESEARCH. FOR EXAMPLE, NEW FACILITIES  
COULD PROMOTE COLLABORATION BY  
HOUSING FACULTY, NOT BASED ON  
DEPARTMENTS, BUT BY PLACING FACULTY  
WITH OVERLAPPING RESEARCH AND TEACHING  
INTERESTS NEAR ONE ANOTHER.

—From the Science and  
Math Initiative report

Efforts will be made to strengthen communications about the arts to inform, engage or converse with outside constituencies involved in recruiting students, filling concert halls, promoting exhibitions, raising consciousness and raising funds. Communication is a key element of a strong arts culture because it explains the intellectual value of the arts and how the arts enhance residential life and contribute to cultural life beyond Bates. Another key element is supporting Advancement's efforts to work with the Arts Collaborative to increase philanthropy for the arts by communicating its importance and raising visibility.

In undergraduate science and math education, the push is on for better facilities and more resources for faculty and undergraduate research. In some cases, the investment in higher education is needed to ensure that incoming students are able to work in a setting as technologically advanced as their high schools. To name just a few recent projects, the new Swarthmore science center brings together biologists, chemists, computer scientists, mathematicians and physicists in a building the college describes as a "billboard for science" because of its environmentally friendly features. A new multi-dimensional curriculum at Dickinson College has used different combinations of biology, chemistry, computer science and psychology to form biochemistry and molecular biology, neuroscience, bioinformatics, nanoscience and environmental studies. Faculty in biology, chemistry, geosciences, physics, psychology and archaeology occupy an integrated center at Hamilton College. And a new center at Haverford



IN THE SCIENCES, STUDENT-FACULTY  
COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH IS SO  
DEEPLY EMBEDDED THAT IT HAS  
BECOME A DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC  
OF THE DIVISION'S CULTURE

—*From the Science and  
Math Initiative report*

enables astronomy, biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, computer science and psychology to offer an integrated educational experience that eases collaboration among departments while preserving individual pursuits.

Bates' opportunities and the competitive landscape suggest that our first step is to improve the quality, coherence and reach of the science and math curriculum, and significant steps are under-

way. For example, with help from the College and the Mellon Foundation the faculty is investigating how more students—including first-year students, students typically underrepresented in natural sciences and mathematics, majors in other divisions and majors in the division—can meet the division's educational and student outcome goals.

Curricular innovations the faculty have proposed include a four-course integrated math and science sequence. To put the design in practice, the division has submitted proposals for substantial funds to allow some scholars to develop the new curricular innovations in place of teaching a class, as well as to support more student research, support assessment activities and hire additional laboratory support staff. These steps are helping to prepare for the new work the recommendations support.

Other resources for these innovations include an intramural grant of \$30,000 from the College's Mellon Faculty Innovation Fund to help the faculty define division-wide goals for teaching and scholarship and ways to measure progress. Recent work includes plans for an introductory math and science sequence and more effective use of computation in math and science. Small groups are also working to improve communication between scholars across the division.

Computation across the curriculum is another idea the division is exploring. With Bowdoin, the division received \$148,780 from the Teagle Foundation to learn more about how students develop quantitative reasoning skills. The investigators are using what they learn to improve teaching and the curriculum and, ultimately, enhance learning on both campuses.

Along with an updated curriculum, Bates needs new facilities for sciences and math. Such an improvement to the campus could shape the interactions of faculty, influence how we teach and do research and signify the importance of sciences and math to prospective students. New facilities could promote collaboration by housing scientists, not by department, but in affinity suites that place faculty with overlapping research and teaching interests near one another. New facilities could also support pedagogical strategies we know to be effective by easing movement between lecture, small group discussion and practical work.

We are proud of the practicing scientists and mathematicians we train for graduate work, and we hope to strengthen all aspects of their work. Also, by graduating more students in sciences and math, Bates can help prepare a new generation of educators who have broad, flexible skills and full awareness of the importance of certain values and attitudes, including courageous inquiry, collaboration and open-mindedness in scientific work. At Bates we believe that all students—not just science majors and math majors—should understand and appreciate natural sciences and mathematics.



**TABLE 5 |** RECOMMENDATIONS  
*for ARTS*

- Establish an Arts Collaborative with sufficient resources and a clear charge to integrate practice, pedagogy and advocacy across programs; infuse the residential learning community with arts awareness and opportunities; extend the reach of the arts more fully across the entire campus and the community; and guide future efforts to improve facilities.
- Appoint a team to lead the Arts Collaborative in its initial phase and charge the members with establishing concrete objectives to guide their work. The team should include four to six individuals who will work effectively across disciplines and campus/community boundaries to sustain, enhance and coordinate the vitality and visibility of the arts.
- Encourage the leadership team to begin work by conducting a pilot phase to inform the Collaborative's long-term approach and practices. After one year, the pilot phase should be evaluated and helpful alterations should be considered.
- Attract and retain top teachers and scholars with expertise in critical arts areas. Aims are to foster interdisciplinary activity, prepare students for a wide array of arts professions and infuse the college with ingenuity and experimentation.
- Invite the Advancement office to work with the Arts Collaborative to build a program to attract philanthropic support for the arts. Strategies include designating an arts endowment as a special category of fund-raising efforts, communicating importance and using face-to-face interaction, and evolving technologies to enhance outreach activities and raise visibility.
- Strengthen communications to inform outside constituencies about the arts at Bates and, where appropriate, engage them in recruiting students, filling concert halls, promoting exhibitions and raising funds. Reach students and audiences more effectively through the Web, Facebook and Twitter, for example, and support efforts to connect to the larger public in more meaningful ways. The campus could step up its practice of hosting excellent and compelling public art.
- Consider the recommendations of the Arts Initiative team regarding space needs in the next phase of the master plan. Goals include providing more opportunities for art studios, rehearsal spaces and storage and places for exhibits, readings and performances across the campus as space is constructed or renovated. Evaluate the feasibility of the Chapel as a performance or rehearsal venue. Renovation should anticipate that performances and exhibitions might be held in this treasured building.

**TABLE 6** | RECOMMENDATIONS *for*  
NATURAL SCIENCES *and* MATHEMATICS

- Design, implement, evaluate and sustain a curriculum that will prepare majors for lead roles in their fields and promote scientific and quantitative literacy for all students. One aim is to become a model among top liberal arts programs in science and math.
- Boost intellectual intensity by recruiting and retaining the best scholars routinely and increasing support for faculty who pursue new research areas and external funds and for student research.
- Construct a new state-of-the-art facility for sciences and math to house a competitive program in a top liberal arts college. Begin by supporting a faculty team to study new facilities and curricular innovation at peer institutions. Invite willing faculty to take part in the fund-raising process.
- Encourage the science and math division to enable more collaborative cross-disciplinary teaching and scholarly work, help more students take advantage of offerings and satisfy requirements in more coherent ways and measure the effectiveness of the curriculum systematically.
- Seek endowed funds to seed new areas of inquiry by science and math scholars with active research programs, position faculty to compete for external grants more aggressively, and embed student-faculty summer research projects into the curriculum. Consider the place of summer research activities in faculty teaching load.



# EXTENDING AND INTEGRATING ELEMENTS OF LEARNING AT BATES

THE PLANNING PROCESS has revealed new ideas about how to build on the strengths of the learning environment at Bates in light of current realities. As a result, we have identified three distinct projects that will improve cohesion, focus support and generally advance learning in the residential liberal arts setting: a Learning Commons to promote excellence, innovation, diversity and collaboration; a Residential Life program that extends intellectual challenge beyond the classroom and helps students strengthen interpersonal skills; and a commitment to diversity as both a goal and resource. An investment in these areas goes to the heart of Bates’ distinctiveness. We believe our investment will pay much greater dividends because our approach is focused on both building each

project individually and at the same time embedding linking elements in the process.

WE HOPE TO BUILD AND FOSTER AN  
INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY AROUND THE  
VALUES OF EXCELLENCE, INNOVATION,  
DIVERSITY AND COLLABORATION.  
THIS COMMUNITY WILL CELEBRATE THE LIFE  
OF THE MIND AND SUPPORT STUDENT AND  
FACULTY ASPIRATIONS TO EXCELLENCE IN  
LEARNING, TEACHING AND SCHOLARSHIP.  
WHILE THIS COMMUNITY WILL INCORPORATE  
THE CLASSROOM, IT WILL ALSO TRANSCEND  
THE CLASSROOM WALLS AND LIBRARY CARRELS  
BY INVIGORATING STUDENT LEARNING  
IN RESIDENCES AND ENCOURAGING NON-  
CURRICULUM-BASED INTERACTIONS BETWEEN  
FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS AROUND IDEAS.

—From the Learning Initiative report

## THE LEARNING COMMONS

MUCH WORK HAS already been done on the objectives of establishing a teaching and learning center, or Learning Commons, to play an important role in supporting intellectual life outside the classroom. Now we are ready to underscore that goal and expand the mission to include a charge of deepening the College’s commitment to faculty research. Through the Learning Commons, Bates will support the quality of learning and enhance the learning experience at Bates by building and fostering an intellectual community around the values of excellence, innovation, diversity and collaboration. Drawing on our traditional strengths, we intend to broaden the intellectual experience for

students and faculty, and do more to realize its flexibility. Our aims include recognizing multiple learning styles; developing more interactive pedagogies; increasing support for faculty scholarship; and integrating study abroad, independent study, research with faculty and other academic interactions into the best practices we use to teach and to learn.

We seek the very best ways for Bates to integrate the learning approaches and tools that lead to increases in coherence, effective communication and community strength. For this reason, the Learning Commons is designed to encourage more of a shared approach to designing ways to support and extend our academic mission. The Commons will focus and coordinate intellectual energy on campus, providing a forum for ideas and conversations at Bates about teaching, scholarship and diversity, and a vehicle for translating those ideas and conversations into actions and results.

In a recent higher education article, Professor Curtis Bonk (2009), author of a new book on how technology is reshaping student learning and the academy, discussed the types of changes he predicts in what he and others call “the learning century.” In addition to the rising influence of open courseware that is freely available to learners throughout the world, he predicts a shift in the responsibility of instructors as some become course and program developers, and others become online facilitators and “learning guides who help students make sense of their options.”

STUDIES SHOW THAT ADULTS WILL HAVE FIVE JOBS BY AGE 35 AND MAKE MULTIPLE CAREER CHANGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY. OUR EDUCATIONAL MODEL PREPARES FUTURE ADULTS TO EXTEND BEYOND COMFORT ZONES, NAVIGATE THESE CONSTANT CHANGES AND EXPLORE NEW DIRECTIONS. WE BRING THEM MOTIVATION AND SKILLS. WE ALSO HELP THEM FEEL EXHILARATED BY GOING INTO THE UNKNOWN; THIS MEANS MAKING TOUGH CHOICES THAT PROMOTE SPECIFIC VALUES FOR THE GOOD OF THE WORLD THAT MAY FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE TO THEM. WHILE WE PUSH THEM TOWARD DISCOMFORT, WE ALSO SUPPORT AND NURTURE THEM IN A FRIENDLY AND WELCOMING WAY. THIS MODEL OF TRANSFORMATION IS UNIQUE.

—A Bates staff member

“The learning revolution is upon us,” writes Robert Zemsky, professor at the University of Pennsylvania and chair and CEO of its Learning Alliance for Higher Education, in his new book, *Making Reform Work* (Rutgers University Press, 2009). “Higher education will have to rethink what it means to be a learning enterprise, including the role the new electronic technologies and insights from the neurosciences have to play in recasting what happens in the classroom, laboratory, and library.”

Both a physical space and a collaborative effort, our Learning Commons will play an important role in bringing fresh insights to the table at Bates. It will allow us to think carefully about vital questions that faculty and students are asking—and should be asking—and to reflect on matters of urgency to the community. With a central location on campus, the Commons will foster scholarly connections across departments, support student intellectual life inside and outside the classroom, coordinate administrative efforts to support student achievement and faculty development, collaborate with Residential Life and help community members transform ideas into policy and practice. By bringing people and activities into spatial proximity, by creating opportunities for people to rub elbows and recognizing scholarly contributions in a more public way, we make connections more visible, tangible, permanent, efficient, and likely to grow in grassroots ways.

Currently, several projects are already underway. Those who are guiding the development of the Learning Commons are planning to implement a peer-tutor training program; a web-based Virtual Commons to streamline access to support and resources for learning, teaching and scholarship; an Innovation Academy for faculty interested in exploring new technologies and pedagogies; and the Summer Scholars program suggested by the Diversity in Excellence project. Additionally, members of the Learning Commons are preparing an inventory that describes the meaningful range of activities that contribute to

WE MUST HELP STUDENTS LEARN AND  
MAKE GOOD CHOICES. IF OUR STUDENTS  
GRADUATE WITH HIGH ACADEMIC MARKS, BUT  
CAN'T HANDLE STRESS AND LIVE PRODUCTIVE  
LIVES, THE COLLEGE IS NOT DOING THEM  
ANY FAVORS.

the intellectual life of the campus. In the future, the Learning Commons will regularly evaluate existing programming offered in support of teaching, learning and research at Bates.

In the upcoming months, a small group of leaders, including representatives of the faculty and the administration, will be appointed to guide and manage the Learning Commons with the

—A Bates staff member

help of an advisory group of faculty, staff and students. This team will work with the Dean of the Faculty and the departments to improve coordination and resources to advance learning goals. The Commons will organize College support for faculty research and scholarship through the commitment of institutional resources and infrastructure to protect time for scholarship. In addition, the Commons will work with Advancement to raise endowment funds that would provide various forms of academic support for faculty and students, and help departments and other programs act on ideals and practices advanced by the Commons. The Learning Commons will collaborate with Admissions to attract larger numbers of gifted students who are seeking a vibrant, diverse intellectual community.

To help the Learning Commons grow, we will reflect on its progress after six months and one year, using these consultations as an opportunity to review and revise goals, activities and procedures.

## RESIDENTIAL LIFE

JUST AS THE Learning Commons will create a prominent space that raises the visibility of learning in the community, just as we intend to add more intentionality and functionality to the way we approach learning at Bates, so, too, do we plan to make a similar investment in residential life. Bates is residential by design, not by accident or merely as a convenience to our students. While students learn directly through the curriculum and classroom experience, the residence halls encourage new ideas and intellectual exchange that are also critically important parts of the learning experience. Stimulating students to learn where they gather and live boosts the intensity of a true liberal arts education and encourages habits of mind that will serve students well throughout their lives.

Although a number of top liberal arts colleges are defined by the fact that almost all the students live on campus, most are failing to achieve the full value of that advantage. In this respect, Bates has an opportunity to set a higher standard for residential life by, in the words of a Bates faculty member, “connecting the positive habits and reflection taught in the classroom with out-of-classroom activities.”

One useful approach might be to think of residential life as an experiential educational opportunity. At colleges and universities across the country, experiential education is broadening the concept of learning. “These developments constitute a profoundly important, indeed revolutionary, challenge to the version of liberal education that has dominated American higher education since the early years of the twentieth century” (Freeland, 2009).

Most colleges offer some form of experiential learning, which can include fairly routine approaches to community service, undergraduate research, or study abroad. Bates, however, has a strong record of connecting liberal education with practice through the senior thesis and other opportunities for independent, engaged research as well as our strong programs in study abroad and through the Harvard Center for Community Partnerships. Now we are ready to increase our emphasis on the residential experience as an integral part of a Bates education and encourage all members of the community to take full advantage of the unique learning opportunities offered in a residential setting.

As we bring students from different backgrounds to our community, we benefit by a richer exploration of topics from many perspectives. At the same time, our living programs must reflect the diversity of our students by offering residential options, from random housing assignments to theme living. As students grow over four years in our learning environment, it is important to note that their interests and learning styles are likely to change; various residential programs may appeal to students at different times in their college careers.

We also aim to use the residential program to increase leadership opportunities and train peer leaders to serve as academic coaches. In the same way that scholar-athletes learn to work together as a team and live out our values and ethos on the playing field, peer leaders will create a deeper level of trust and cooperation in the residence halls.

This year Bates is launching an innovative pilot program to link first-year students with the theme of sustainability, in particular, through an international campaign by an action group devoted to finding solutions to the climate crisis. The program will involve the arts and sciences: readings, discussions, visual arts and sustainable practices. Students will take the lead in shaping the program and determining its success throughout the year.

Today's students have grown up in a world where online communication and text messaging have taken the place of many face-to-face interactions. Using social networking they tune out differences rather than confronting them, and in the process bypass opportunities to learn. By promoting interaction, new learning approaches and diverse activities, residential life at Bates will advance understanding among students and greatly enrich the value of a Bates education.

We envision the Learning Commons playing a key role in advancing these goals. For instance, the Commons will work closely with members of the Campus Facilities Master Planning Committee on the design of new student residences and plan programming based in student residences designed to encourage both academic excellence and the cultivation of the life of the mind.

We have demonstrated through the success of our newest residence hall, 280 College Street, that when the enterprise of learning is kept at the forefront of the design of a building, the facility itself becomes the program. The Learning Commons (or the Extracurricular and Residential Life Committee, which is currently dormant) could also help create a partnership of faculty, students and staff to advise the Dean of Students Office about ways to continue to develop learning opportunities in the residential environment.

Recognizing that residential liberal arts education is a distinctive element of the Bates’ experience, Advancement should collaborate with the Dean of Students and others to design and implement funding opportunities that would advantage the Residential Life programs.

## DIVERSITY IN EXCELLENCE

AN INTEGRAL PART of the entire educational community at Bates is the Diversity in Excellence project, which is designed to support learning and teaching about difference and diversity issues, identify useful educational practices and help the community cultivate a more inclusive climate. By serving as a hub where members of the community discover and present ideas and actions related to the many dimensions of diversity, the project will foster the core principles of Bates.

At Bates, we believe that diversity encompasses a full range of experiences and ideas, which we share and value as a necessary prerequisite for excellence in the life of the mind. We also believe that each person in the community brings a distinctive set of skills and experiences that can flourish when we all acknowledge—and support—various and unique identities.

EXCELLENCE INVIGORATED BY  
DIVERSITY LIES AT THE HEART OF THE  
BATES COLLEGE MISSION. DIVERSITY  
IS MORE THAN AN INDIVIDUAL ATTRIBUTE.  
IT IS AN INTELLECTUAL RESOURCE,  
A SITE OF INQUIRY, A TOOL FOR DISCOVERY,  
AND A FUND FOR CREATIVITY.

*—From the Learning Initiative report*

At the same time, we acknowledge some constraints to diversifying the campus. Higher education scholars George Kuh and Paul Umbach have found that some powerful features of liberal arts colleges might be confining factors in a world that is increasingly diverse in every way (2005). Among the constraints they name are ones that Bates, in particular,



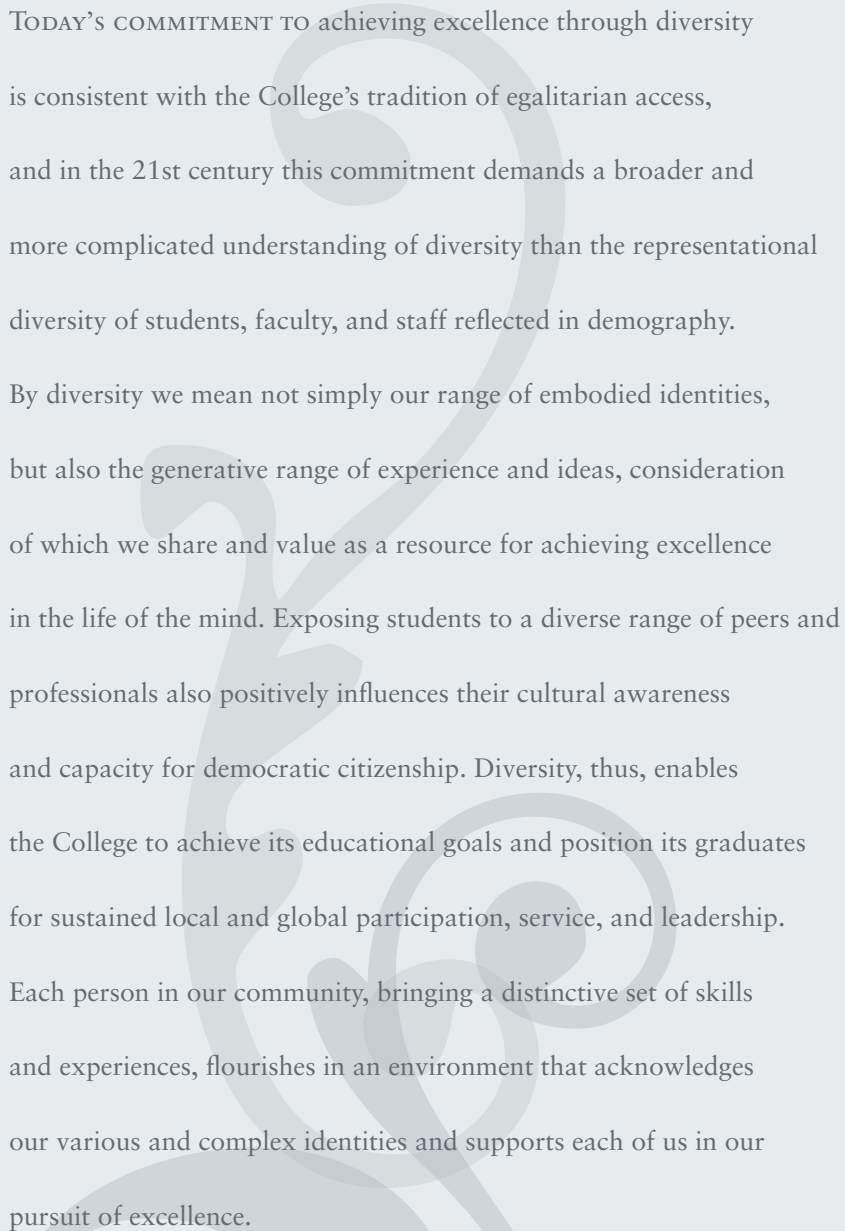
currently faces: location, and faculty and students with fairly homogeneous backgrounds.

As Bates overcomes these constraints and nurtures diversity, we advance our high standard of excellence across the board. If Bates is to offer students a powerful education in the liberal arts, the experience should help community members learn from each other and develop new paths to knowledge together. In this way, students become “capable of accepting criticism from others, tolerant of ambiguity, and respectful of others with different views ” (AAC&U Board of Directors, 2006).

Goals include offering support for learning and teaching about diversity; identifying ways for faculty, staff and students to use diversity as a resource for learning and address diversity issues to cultivate an inclusive climate; and linking faculty, administrators and academic support staff to professional networks, information and funding sources, and best practices for constructing an inclusive climate.

Other aims are to connect community members through dialogues and other forms of intellectual engagement by sponsoring events, blogs, or other means to promote networking and collaboration. With the Learning Commons, project leaders will plan, implement and evaluate support for teaching, learning and scholarship that enhances diversity and excellence. The special assistant to the president will lead and manage the project, with colleagues across the College and in the Learning Commons to help guide and integrate activities.

Project leaders will invite Communications and Media Relations and Advancement to help increase visibility of and philanthropy for diversity initiatives; resources could help increase College-wide strategies to promote a more inclusive environment. As with the Learning Commons, we will reflect on the progress of the diversity project after six months and one year, using these consultations as an opportunity to review and revise goals, activities and procedures.



TODAY'S COMMITMENT TO achieving excellence through diversity is consistent with the College's tradition of egalitarian access, and in the 21st century this commitment demands a broader and more complicated understanding of diversity than the representational diversity of students, faculty, and staff reflected in demography. By diversity we mean not simply our range of embodied identities, but also the generative range of experience and ideas, consideration of which we share and value as a resource for achieving excellence in the life of the mind. Exposing students to a diverse range of peers and professionals also positively influences their cultural awareness and capacity for democratic citizenship. Diversity, thus, enables the College to achieve its educational goals and position its graduates for sustained local and global participation, service, and leadership. Each person in our community, bringing a distinctive set of skills and experiences, flourishes in an environment that acknowledges our various and complex identities and supports each of us in our pursuit of excellence.

*—from the Bates catalog*

**TABLE 7 |** RECOMMENDATIONS  
*for the LEARNING COMMONS*

- Organize a Learning Commons to improve the learning environment for the whole community. The Learning Commons will support the quality of learning and enhance the learning experience at Bates by building and fostering an intellectual community around the values of excellence, innovation, diversity and collaboration.
- Appoint a small group of leaders to guide and manage the Learning Commons. This group should include representatives of the faculty and the administration who are committed to establishing and sustaining a collaborative approach to leadership.
- Appoint an Advisory Group of faculty, staff and students to guide the development of the Learning Commons. This body might also coordinate other elements of learning at Bates.
- Charge the Learning Commons to collaborate with Residential Life in taking consistent steps to support student intellectual life inside and outside the classroom. The Learning Commons should also collaborate with the faculty, departments and others routinely to implement this charge.
- Charge the Learning Commons to emphasize research and scholarship across Bates. The Learning Commons should work with the Dean of the Faculty and the departments to improve coordination and resources to advance this goal.
- Charge the Learning Commons to encourage faculty, staff and students to take up cutting-edge issues and promote networking and collaboration as innovative practices. The Learning Commons will provide a forum for ideas and conversations at Bates about teaching, scholarship and learning and a vehicle for translating those ideas and conversations into actions and results.
- Invite Admissions to work with the Learning Commons to attract larger numbers of gifted students who are seeking a vibrant, diverse intellectual community.
- Invite Advancement to work with the Learning Commons to raise endowment funds for the Commons. The resource would provide various forms of academic support for faculty and students, and help departments and other programs act on ideas and practices advanced by the Commons.

**TABLE 7 | RECOMMENDATIONS**  
*for the LEARNING COMMONS (continued)*

- Prioritize faculty development by coordinating the planning, implementation and evaluation of existing programs in support of the pedagogical development of faculty like the New Faculty Development Workshop and Seminar, the May Conference and the lunchtime pedagogy series.
- Make scholarship more visible on campus by publicly clarifying and reaffirming the College’s commitment to protected time for scholarship. Recognize the scholarly contributions of faculty, staff, students, alumni and community members, and organize opportunities to share and celebrate each other’s work.
- Because the Learning Commons is a new addition to the campus, reflect on its progress after six months and one year. Use these consultations as an opportunity to review and revise goals, activities and procedures.

**TABLE 8 |** RECOMMENDATIONS  
*for RESIDENTIAL LIFE*

- Develop and promote campus-wide recognition of the residential experience as an integral part of a Bates education. Encourage all members of the community to take full advantage of the unique learning opportunities offered in a residential setting.
- Continue to provide and further develop student housing options, including random housing assignments, theme living and other strategies to appeal to and meet the different and developing personal and intellectual needs of students over the course of their time at Bates.
- Continue to upgrade student housing through the Campus Facilities Master Plan and recognize every opportunity to use residential space as a prime venue to support the community of learners at Bates.
- Take advantage of the residential environment to bring together students with different backgrounds and interests to advance their understanding of difference.
- Boost peer leadership efforts and create other programs to train peer leaders and guide them as they help other students live, learn and contribute to the quality of the community at Bates.
- Create a partnership of faculty, students and staff to advise the Dean of Students Office about ways to continue to develop learning opportunities in the residential environment. This body could draw from the Extracurricular and Residential Life Committee, which is currently dormant, or it could be developed through the Learning Commons.
- Invite Advancement to collaborate with the Dean of Students and others to design and implement funding opportunities that would advantage Residential Life, recognizing that residential liberal arts education is a distinctive element of the Bates' experience.

**TABLE 9 | RECOMMENDATIONS**  
*for the PROJECT on DIVERSITY in EXCELLENCE*

- Organize a Project on Diversity in Excellence for the Bates community. Encourage the continued development of a Bates educational experience that prepares all students for citizenship, leadership and service in a diverse democracy, and that will enhance the capacity of all members of the Bates community to learn from each other and develop new paths of knowledge together.
- Designate the Special Assistant to the President to lead and manage the Project. The President and the Special Assistant may invite others to join a small executive leadership team.
- Designate the Advisory Group of the Learning Commons to work with the Special Assistant to guide the Project and integrate it into activities of the Commons where appropriate.
- Charge the Project with identifying and explaining useful educational practices for the community to consider and use. Link faculty, administrators and academic support staff to professional networks, information and funding sources, models and best practices at other institutions for enhancing professional development and training.
- Charge the Project with developing specific strategies to help the community cultivate a more inclusive climate.
- Invite CMR and Advancement to collaborate with Project leaders to increase visibility of and philanthropy for diversity initiatives. Resources could also help increase College-wide strategies to promote a more inclusive environment.
- Prepare all students for leadership and service in a multicultural, rapidly changing, highly competitive world. Endow a summer scholars program that focuses on building student leadership skills.
- Connect community members with each other for campus dialogues and other intellectual engagements, including those addressing diversity. Sponsor interactive spaces such as blogs; “Breaking Bread” partnerships; networking for collaborators in research, teaching or professional development.
- Reflect and assess Project’s progress at six months and one year. Use these consultations as an opportunity to review and revise the Project’s goals and activities.

## SUPPORTING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

AS THE PROCESS of developing and vetting this plan has shown, we have tapped energy on campus to develop a vision of a new kind of liberal arts learning and living community. Now we face the significant challenges of acting on our very serious aspirations to become the site for the liberal arts in the new learning century.

It is critical and heartening to note that each initiative team used an innovative approach to complete its charge. The members of the Learning team formed new collaborations among faculty, administration and professional staff and across institutional lines—putting into practice the same highly collaborative, network-based organizational design they believe can boost intellectual engagement across the College. The arts team relied on students in a sociology class on research methods to gather data from members of the community, analyze the results and share their findings on campus. By integrating institutional research into the curriculum, these students showed that they can illuminate current real-world problems and that everyone at Bates has a role in strengthening the arts. The science and math team looked to internal and external funding sources, developing not only collaboration skills, but also outreach and broader disciplinary connections between what we are doing at Bates and national trends on science education.

Taken together, these approaches reflect an overarching theme: crossing well-established, often hierarchical divisions and boundaries—or, as mentioned earlier in the report, turning borders into seams. By challenging borders, the very process of discussing meaningful change has strengthened Bates. Many who took part in this work expect that way of working to become a valuable source of energy and new ideas in the future.

Other themes also underlie our collective effort. For example, each team calls for us to adapt the distinctive characteristics of the Bates experience to 21st century needs rather than simply imitate or borrow from other institutions. Learning in a residential community such as Bates will continue to be one of the best investments that can be made to develop the fullness of an individual. At Bates, we intend to deepen our own stake in this important cause by developing and promoting residential life as an integral part of our academic life, and encouraging everyone to take full advantage of the unique learning opportunities offered in a residential setting.

We envision that the Learning Commons will collaborate with Residential Life in taking consistent steps to support student intellectual life inside and outside the classroom; we will boost peer leadership efforts and create other programs to train student leaders and guide them as they help other students live, learn

**TABLE 10 |** GUIDING  
QUESTIONS

- How should we refocus our work as new generations come along, as technology reshapes our environment, and as innovative pedagogies improve and complicate ways of learning and teaching?
- As for where our work will take place, we are calling for new construction, but also for more creative use of existing physical space. How can we make more creative use of existing space, recognizing its full potential, as we update the Campus Facilities Master Plan.
- How can we realize the full potential of the residential aspect of learning at Bates?
- How do we both act on and convey to the broader world our very serious aspirations to become the site for the new liberal arts?
- Can the College meet the challenge of embracing new methods and arrangements to enrich the investment in individuals, places and ideas that make us what we are?

and contribute to the quality of the community at Bates. The Learning Commons will provide a forum for ideas and conversations at Bates about teaching, scholarship and learning and a vehicle for translating those ideas and conversations into actions and results. In addition, the Commons will encourage faculty, staff and students to take up cutting-edge issues and promote networking and collaboration as innovative practices. As part of everything we do, we will build sustainability into the fabric of our students’ lives by building on the energy and resources we have invested in environmental friendliness and continue to be a national leader in environmental action.

The fundamentals at Bates will not change: We remain dedicated to helping aspiring students develop their powers of critical assessment, aesthetic sensibility and independent thought so that they will realize ground-breaking intellectual goals and see impossible dreams come true. It is wonderful that these reports affirm and extend these—our deepest—aims.

The question we face is how to realize these aims as new generations come along, as technology reshapes our environment and as innovative pedagogies improve and complicate ways of learning and teaching. To address these challenges, this plan calls for closer integration of administrative and academic arrangements.

For example, the Learning Commons will identify transformational trends and issues before the community that require debate and discussion across



the range of academic and institutional offices at the College, taking the steps necessary to transform the content of those conversations into policy proposals for members of the faculty and administration to consider.

The Commons will also work with appropriate faculty committees and offices within the administration to deepen the College's existing commitment to faculty scholarship by providing seed money in support of research that will lead to external grants, grants in support of expenses associated with archival research and work at research sites, expanded resources in support of faculty participation in networks of scholarly communication off campus and expanded support for expenses relating to ordinary research costs.

To build on another helpful practice, a new kind of leadership team will guide the Arts Collaborative by establishing specific objectives, action steps and operating principles to shape the pilot year. In its first phase, the Collaborative will work closely with Advancement to establish a philanthropic approach to permanent support for arts endeavors, implement strategies for communication and connectivity to build constituencies and reach them systematically, and draw on ideas in the Arts Initiative report to propose options for the Master Planning Steering Committee to consider. At the same time, they will demonstrate a new phase of the collective leadership that led to *Choices for Bates*.

Other plans include working to expand events (e.g., Martin Luther King Day, Convocation, Commencement and alumni events) so they involve students, faculty, staff and alumni in broader discussions related to Bates' core values and identity; providing more support for informal discussions in a variety of formats; and including members of the Dean of Students Office on faculty committees that deal with student learning (such as the Educational Policy Committee, Curriculum and Calendar Committee, First Year Seminar and Writing Committee).

In both the science and arts initiatives, faculty recommend that they take on a clearer role in the admissions process, joining colleagues from Admissions as they review prospective students. The groups call for us to be more aggressive about attracting students with specific intellectual interests and diverse backgrounds—artists and scientists, performers and those who are intensely interested in helping their peers. Both science and arts faculty would also like to work more closely with colleagues from the Office of Advancement, helping to inform the next campaign and other fundraising priorities and giving presentations to Bates alumni and other potential donors.

Each initiative group also wants to improve facilities so that all kinds of spaces support future educational needs and enhance residential possibilities. The Diversity in Excellence project and the Arts Initiative look forward to a closer working relationship with Residential Life in using the

residential community more fully. The groups ask for new construction, but also for more creative use of existing physical space.

To support these aims, Advancement will be invited to collaborate with departments, offices and partnerships to design and implement funding opportunities that will support the initiatives discussed in this report. By working closely with the Arts Collaborative, science faculty, the Learning Commons and Residential Life, we expect to generate resources that will provide various forms of academic support for faculty and students, and help departments and other programs act on ideals and practices advanced by the initiatives.

So, what are our next steps? Recommendations that call for new College-wide emphases or even more powerful programmatic approaches might require changes in the way new or existing financial resources are allocated. Still other recommendations address our defining values, the intensity of our intellectual engagement or some dimensions of our culture. These ideas ask if innovation or new forms of collaboration or connectivity could lead to better ways to achieve our goals. Recommendations that call for new philanthropic support for faculty and students, new College-wide programs, or new or renovated facilities will not go forward without the commitment to raise the funds we need.

Clearly, these recommendations—and this report itself—do not represent the end of our strategic process, but rather they mark an important stage in our development that synthesizes the work and thoughts of many people, and will lead to more definitive action in the future. In many respects, the process has already proven to be a great success. It has brought the community together in a spirit of collaboration, and exciting ideas have emerged to prepare us for a leading role in this new learning century.

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## WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT AT BATES

IS THE FUNDAMENTAL NATURE OF **WHAT** WE DO AND **WHY** WE DO IT. BATES REMAINS DEDICATED TO HELPING STUDENTS REALIZE THEIR INTELLECTUAL GOALS AND DEVELOP POWERS OF CRITICAL ASSESSMENT, AESTHETIC SENSIBILITY, AND INDEPENDENT THOUGHT. We STRIVE TO ACHIEVE THIS MISSION BECAUSE WE RECOGNIZE THE FULL RANGE OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE. IT IS WONDERFUL THAT THIS REPORT AFFIRMS THESE—OUR DEEPEST—AIMS.

*—President Elaine Hansen*

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